

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, KS

SUBJECT: F5ES FOR ROK

REF: (A) SEOUL 4774; (B) STATE 141074; (C) SEOUL 4518

1. WHILE EMBASSY'S PROPOSALS REF C HAVE RECEIVED SERIOUS CONSIDERATION, IT IS OUR CONCLUSION THAT WE SHOULD PROCEED AS INDICATED IN STATE 141074.

2. IF 21 F5ES NOW IN TAIWAN WERE CONVERTED FROM MAP AND SOLD TO ROK NOW AT FUNDED COST (PARA 3 SEOUL 4518) MAP FUNDS THUS RECOUPED COULD NOT AUTOMATICALLY BE USED TO FUND FUTURE MAP PROCUREMENT OF NEW F5ES. FOR ONE THING, PRICE OF NEW PRODUCTION WOULD BE APPROXIMATELY \$700,000 MORE EACH, OR A TOTAL OF NEARLY \$15 MILLION DOLLARS MORE (PARA. 2. STATE 141074). MOREOVER, USE OF RECOUPED FUNDS FOR PROCUREMENT IN FUTURE FISCAL YEARS WOULD BE SUBJECT

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TO CEILINGS, IF ANY,(SUCH AS THIS YEAR'S FRASER

AMENDMENT CEILING,)AND MIGHT THEREFORE END BY BEING COMPLETELY UNUSABLE OR USABLE FOR F5ES ONLY AT SACRIFICE OTHER ITEMS OF EQUIVALENT VALUE.

3. WE RECOGNIZE THAT FMS CASH SALE OF QUOTE USED UNQUOTE

21 TAIWAN AIRCRAFT COUPLED WITH MAP FUNDING OF 21 NEW AIRCRAFT FROM FUTURE PRODUCTION MIGHT HAVE PSYCHOLOGICAL VALUE TO KOREANS COMPARED WITH DELIVERY OF 21 TAIWAN AIRCRAFT AS FULFILLING MAP PURCHASE WITH FUTURE AIRCRAFT TO BE BOUGHT FMS SALES. POSSIBILITY, HOWEVER, THAT MAP FUNDS WOULD BE ESSENTIALLY UNUSABLE FOR FUTURE PROCUREMENT OUTWEIGHS THIS PSYCHOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE AND WE MUST THEREFORE PROCEED AS PRESENTLY PLANNED.

4. RE PARA. 4 SEOUL 4518, DEPARTMENT HAS PROPOSED A PLAN FOR REDISTRIBUTION OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT RECOVERED FROM CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM WHICH WOULD, IF APPROVED, PROVIDE ADDITIONAL AIRCRAFT OF VARIOUS TYPES FOR ROK. THIS SHOULD ASSIST IN MITIGATING ANTICIPATED ROK REACTION TO OUR PROVIDING REHAB QUOTE AS NEW UNQUOTE AIRCRAFT INSTEAD OF NEW PRODUCTION LINE PLANES. HOWEVER, DOD HAS NOT YET PUT IN ALL OF ITS BIDS, AND WE CANNOT NOW PREDICT WHEN REDISTRIBUTION WILL BE APPROVED OR WHAT EQUIPMENT MAY BE EARMARKED FOR ROK.

5. WHILE IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO BE ABLE TO INFORM ROKG OF ITS SHARE OF THIS EQUIPMENT AT SAME TIME DECISION IS COMMUNICATED ON TAIWAN F5ES, WE CANNOT BE SURE DECISIONS ON SEA ASSETS WILL BE MADE IN TIME TO TELL KOREANS. DESPITE OUR BEST EFFORTS YOU MAY HAVE TO ALERT ROKG TO RETURN OF TAIWAN AIRCRAFT BEFORE SWEETENERS ARE TIED DOWN. NEEDLESS TO SAY, WE WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE VIGOROUS CASE FOR KOREA AND INFORM YOU ASAP OF REDISTRIBUTION ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR YOU.

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